

**THE CONNECTICUT PARENTAGE ACT, RAISED BILL H.B. 6321:
REDUCING POVERTY FOR CHILDREN OF LGB COUPLES**

Greater Hartford Legal Aid (GHLA), Connecticut Legal Services (CLS), and New Haven Legal Assistance Association (NHLAA) support the Connecticut Parentage Act (CPA) (H.B. 6321). The CPA ensures that parent-child relationships are recognized and protected regardless of a parent's gender or sexual orientation. The CPA also reduces barriers to family recognition that contribute to a higher incidence of poverty among children of same-sex couples.

The children of LGBT parents experience a higher incidence of poverty, in part because of discrimination, and in part because of lack of legal recognition of their families. This can be compounded by other forms of discrimination based on race and/or disability.

- In Connecticut, poverty rates are higher for LGBT people than poverty rates for cisgender straight people.¹
- Nationwide, 24% of children being raised by same-sex couples live in poverty.²

The CPA will reduce barriers to parentage recognition that can contribute to poverty for the children of same-sex couples.

Second-parent adoptions are still recommended for parents in same-sex relationships, even if they are married, because of uneven legal protections across the nation.³ Currently, in Connecticut, same-sex parents must undertake this process in Probate Court, which can entail a filing fee and a social study at the couple's expense. The cost and complexity of this process can be a barrier to family recognition for low-income LGB couples.

Under the CPA, intended parents in a same-sex relationship, whether married or unmarried, can sign a voluntary acknowledgment of parentage at the hospital when their child is born, rather than going through the expense and intrusion of the second-parent adoption process.

The CPA will provide a path to parentage recognition for unmarried, non-biological parents in same-sex relationships. This will ensure not only continued emotional and psychological support for their children, but also greater access to resources such as health insurance and child support.

¹Choi, Badgett & Wilson, *LGBT Poverty in the United States* at 11 (Dec. 2019), available at <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/National-LGBT-Poverty-Oct-2019.pdf>.

² The National LGBTQ Anti-Poverty Action Network, *Poverty At the End of the Rainbow* (2020), available at <https://nclr.turtl.co/story/poverty-at-the-end-of-the-rainbow/page/2/2>.

³ See <https://www.glad.org/overview/second-parent-adoption/connecticut/>.